

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEMORANDUM

October 14, 1980

WILLIAM J. SCOTT
ATTORNEY GENERAL

TO File

FROM Reed

SUBJECT Dead Creek/Sauget: Ken Mensing conversation with
anonymous source 10/10/80

On 10/10/80 at 3:10 P.M. Ken Mensing called me to say that he had just finished talking with a man who walked into his office in Collinsville to talk about the Dead Creek/Sauget situation. The man was about 50 years old, and would not give Ken his name or tell him how we could reach him.

The man said he was born and raised in the Cahokia/Sauget area. He remembered quite well the dump area across from what is now the Sauget Village Hall. He described the condition of the dump as "really bad". The dirt that was hauled out from the pit, when the hole was dug, was used apparently to make berms around the old Mobil Oil tank farm. The hole was dug out by A.R. Hershey Company, an area contractor.

The man mentioned oleum as being one of the things that was dumped in the fill area, and described it as being "bad stuff, something you don't want to mess with."

The man said that years ago, Dead Creek used to be a lot wider than it is now, with a lot more flow. He remembers the dangers from Dead Creek as being as bad if not worse than they are now, and actually remembers incidents of animals going into the Dead Creek area and not coming out alive.

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He mentioned that on Route 3, which is also known as Mississippi Avenue, there are two manufacturers over there, one of which is Midwest Rubber Company, and the other is the old Darling Fertilizer Plant. The man said that when he was younger, both Midwest Rubber and Darling Fertilizer had drainage pipes running from the west side of Route 3 under that road and along Queeny Avenue with an outfall to Dead Creek. Also, Monsanto's old sulfuric acid plant used to send its run off directly to Dead Creek, somewhat in the area where Monsanto's property runs up against what is now Cerro Copper property.

The A.R. Herschey Company that he mentioned before, supposedly was a family enterprise. The man thought that a couple of the sons or brothers of the original owner might yet still be alive and living in the area. He mentioned the names of a Lyle Herschey and a Russel Herschey; he thought they might yet be living in the Belleville/East St. Louis area.

He also remembered at one time, perhaps as far back as in the '40s, that there was a farmer in the area who owned property abutting Dead Creek. He remembers that the farmer was intending to file a civil suit for damages to his crops, etc. because of damaging fumes from the creek itself. But the man remembers that for some reason the suit was not filed, and he surmizes that the farmer was pressured into dropping the suit by Monsanto and the other companies in the area. He remembered the farmer's name as being Carl Stillman. [Later, when I was talking to Ken Mensing, he opened the phone book and verified Mr. Stillman's existence. He apparently lives at #1 Bryerwood Drive in Belleville, phone number 618/397-2778].

The man remembered the quarry pit that was dug quite some years ago, and now is the pond by the florist shop. The man said he used to swim in there as a kid, and that the pond was quite deep maybe 30 to 40 feet deep. The man mentioned two other people in the area who might be willing to talk, and would have the kind of information we might need. One was an Ollie Reeves, a hauler in the area. [Ken Mensing remembers this guy Reeves as being one of the regular haulers of ash, cinders, etc. from Monsanto to Paul Sauget's other site. The man also mentioned that Charlie White, currently the Village of Sauget police chief. Ken Mensing was somewhat dubious about the prospect of this person spilling his guts to us].

As to the big dump south of the Village Hall that the man earlier described, he said it was near what is now Queeny Avenue and comprised approximately 3 to 4 acres. He said to Ken, however, that that particular dump was only one of several, and that we should also look into those. He mentioned there being a dump right behind what is now the Chartrand School in Sauget. He recalls that the dirt that was hauled away from that area when that hole was dug was used to fill in the area upon which the Sauget Village Hall was built. He also recalled a second disposal area very near and slightly north of the present Edwin Cooper Company Plant. He said it's just a field now. That plant used to be operated by the Chemical Warfare Services Division of the Army, and used to be known as Monsanto North. He recalls that Monsanto used to dump there waste products in a variety of places, using one site ahead of time, until it was filled up, cover it over and move on to another spot.

When the guy left Ken Mensing's Office, he said he might be back again to talk, perhaps next week. Ken had asked him whether he would have any trouble talking to the Attorney General's Office, and Ken got the impression that he would not be hesitant to do so. So Ken told me that when the guy does indeed come back, that he will try to set up some sort of a conference call involving me, perhaps to set up a time when we can all sit down, face to face, and discuss this further. Ken felt that the guy was fairly credible, although he did offer an awful lot of information and Ken wasn't sure why he was doing this, but that he did not ever contradict himself or seem to make any errors. Ken was not sure as to the source of this gentleman's knowledge, other than perhaps simply that he has lived in the area for quite some time.

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OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEMORANDUM

October 15, 1980

WILLIAM J. SCOTT
ATTORNEY GENERAL

TO File
FROM Reed Neuman
SUBJECT Dead Creek: History of case

The case concerns an approximately one-half mile section of the Dead Creek, from Queeny Ave. at the Cahokia-Sauget border south to Judith Lane in Cahokia. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) began getting scattered reports in May of this year that materials in the mostly-dry creek bed were smoldering and "glowing". It wasn't until late August, however, that IEPA learned that a nearby resident's dog died of apparent chemical burns after rolling in the creek bed. IEPA began testing the soil and water in both Dead Creek and a quarry pit pond adjacent and connected to it in this area. Tests revealed high levels of toxic metals, PCB's and various organic compounds. At IEPA's request, the Illinois Department of Transportation installed a snow fence to seal off the area. IEPA held a press conference in Cahokia on 9/24/80 to inform

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